

Om Om Om

Let there be peace, let there be peace, let there be peace!

What is Yoga? The Sanskrit dhatu or root Yuj means to bind, and is also where the English language derives the word Yoke i.e. to yoke, to harness and in a literal sense is a wooden beam used between a pair of Oxen or other animals, in order to pull a plough, or cart, or caravan.

It is often heard that Yoga means Union, which it is. Yet in another sense the meanings of Yoga are legion. Myriad ways and truths revolve around the single fact we are each unique. One person's experience of Yoga is undeniably different to that of another's. This is an inescapable fact; that while prescriptive routines may be followed, the follower will always make of it their own technique. A story is always a story in the telling! The sublime art of Yoga, is not corporate, it is not a system for deceiving the masses, the interminable Godman making his way with guile or deceit. It is not an exercise practice for acquiring a beautiful body, for we are all beautiful within. It is not a whimsical elucidation on philosophy: rather philosophy itself. Meditation is not something you do, it is what you are!

There are traditionally eight limbs of yoga known as the Ashtanga... yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana & samadhi. It is the third and fourth limbs, namely Asana (Posture) and Pranayama (Breath control) that I would like to speak of tonight.

Asana means seat, and is traditionally placed before Pranayama, since the aims of practicing Yog Asanas are to strengthen the body, making it fit for practice of Breath Control. It is never advised that one begins practice of Pranayama without the guidance of Guru, nor is it recommended that Pranayama be undertaken immediately after intense practice of Yoga Postures. There are Eight Million Four Hundred Thousand Yoga Asanas. It is not necessary to master this many Postures at all, I would encourage you to work slowly with great restraint (do not overdo it!). Nevertheless, determination and constant practice [abhyasa] is certainly most vital to successful Yoga practice, and the potency of Brahmacharya (continence) is too big a subject to go into detail here. Do not push yourself too hard, a Yogi's body and mind is becoming supple yet strong, lithe yet limber, faultless yet humble, and peaceful while enervated. Of the seven chakras, beginning with the Muladhara at the base of the spine, and rising through Svadhistana, Manipuraka, Anahata, Vishuddha, Agni & dissipating into the Thousand Petalled Lotus of Sahasrara - the Heart Chakra is the centre. Focusing the spirit in the heart of hearts one's love for the world, and peace of mind, becomes overflowing while remaining perfectly still. From this stillness a Yogi has great resilience, even in the face of the worst troubles. To reside in the heart centre [hridayam] is the practitioner's greatest wealth, tempered with austerity in the mode of Goodness.

Adi yoginam shiv sahasranam
patala bhumi svagartatya dhi

Shiva the original yogi and Guru is alone Omnipresent,

from the lowest planetary system to the lofty Swargaloka, may His wisdom
fill the Yogin's consciousness with Chit shakti!

In the words of Sir John Woodroffe (Arthur Avalon)

“Kundalini is the static form of the creative energy in bodies which is the
source of all energies, including Prana.”

Harih om tat sat